

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 164-176, 289 and 334-352 are pending. Claims 164-176 and 349-252 stand rejected and claim 172 is objected to. Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 289 and 334-348 are allowed and that claim 172 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. 103

The Office Action sets forth at page 2, paragraph 2 "Claims 164-171, 173-176, 349-352 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ansarina (6526318) in view of Zabara (5025807)." Claim 172 was objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but found to recite allowable subject matter. While respectfully disagreeing with these claim rejections, in order to expedite issuance of a patent on the subject matter found to be allowable, the Applicants have amended claim 164 to include all of the elements of claim 172 and intervening claim 171. The Applicants thus respectfully submit that claim 164 is in a condition for allowance.

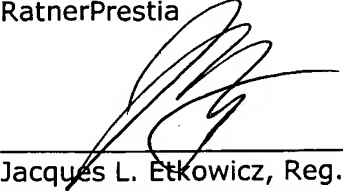
Claims 165-169, 173-176, and 349-352 are also allowable, because they depend either directly or indirectly on allowable claim 164. The Applicants have canceled claim 170, thus obviating its rejection.

The Applicants draw the attention of the Examiner to: (a) an office action issued by the Examiner in copending US Application No. 10/258,714, dated March 16, 2006, and (b) an office action issued by the Examiner in copending US Application No. 10/753,882, dated March 16, 2006.

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicants submit that the application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

RatnerPrestia



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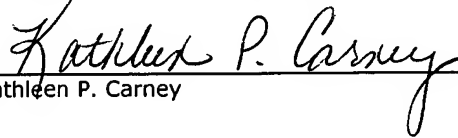
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The Director is hereby authorized to charge or credit Deposit Account No. **18-0350** for any additional fees, or any underpayment or credit for overpayment in connection herewith.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on April 21, 2006.



Kathleen P. Carney